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# The Real Face of Terrorism Comes in All Colors

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## THE REAL FACE OF TERRORISM COMES IN ALL COLORS

*D. Saied*

Despite the fact that we are 1.4 billion people spread around the globe from very different countries and cultures and with different interpretations of Islam, the American media (Fox News, most obnoxiously) and government (TSA, most notoriously) label us all terrorists or terrorist sympathizers. It's a sad, horrible lie. It's an egregious moral and social injustice with serious ramifications. It's also a personal wrong to each of the millions of peaceful, innocent people who follow Islam in the U.S. I am a student at Cal Poly, and I, one of them.

I'm as American as anyone else, but those who spew virulent, violent, incensing words against Muslims want to rob me of my identity and subjugate me to a 2nd class citizen status. The Anti-Muslim hate mongers get television shows, talk radio, and prime real estate at book retailers to spew their lies. All fine and good for free speech, some would argue, but what about the facts? The fact is that we, the vast peaceful Muslim majority—the ones who regularly condemn terrorism with our websites, newsletters, Twitter, and Facebook posts—are being slandered. Ask the FBI. According to FBI's own statistics, 94% of terrorist attacks in the U.S. between 1980 and 2005 were NOT committed by Muslims. That's right. In fact, the FBI reports that just as many extremist Jewish groups (7%) committed terrorism as extremist Muslim groups (6%).<sup>1</sup> But you never heard that before, did you? Because the general population is being manipulated, and Muslims are methodically being discriminated against.

The real face of terrorism comes in all colors, but the so-called "fair and balanced" media is really a series of one-sided attack on national broadcast television, featuring the greatest liars. When asked about Muslim nations, Ann Coulter famously stated America

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should “invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity.” And Steven Emerson, author of *American Jihad: The Terrorists Living Among Us*, would agree. With a title like that, how can you possibly believe this isn’t propaganda? This book is available at the Cal Poly library, and I have yet to find any rebuttal on the shelves. Thank you, Cal Poly. But it goes beyond rude to downright threatening when Rod Parsely, “spiritual adviser” to presidential candidate John McCain wrote, “The fact is that America was founded, in part, with the intention of seeing this false religion [Islam] destroyed.” (From his 2005 book, *Silent No More*.) Yes, destroyed. This man who had the ear of one of the most powerful political figures in the U.S. obviously meant me and my innocent family and friends violence for absolutely no founded reason whatsoever. I am a law-abiding, tax-paying, contributing member to American society, and yet, just because I am Muslim, I am lumped in with some tiny contingent of unstable maniacs. American Muslims should not have to endure these threats of violence from people on high. McCain’s advisor needs a refresher on the U.S. Constitution. Freedom of religion is guaranteed for everyone, and the U.S. government is forbidden from establishing (or persecuting) members of a religion.

Do not be lulled into thinking that is just a matter of ratings, rhetoric, and put downs. Hate can lead to tremendously awful things. Looking at relatively recent American history, we see that hate and bigotry lead to subjugation of African-Americans (lynchings, assassinations, and segregation into the 60s) and revocation of Japanese-American citizenship when they were cited as a “threat to national security” and stripped of their freedom, their homes, businesses, and even the clothes in their closets. Have American Muslims have been spared outright discrimination, thus far? In short, no.

While it may not be on the front page, American Muslims are being targeted and harassed, beaten, threatened, and even killed. 32% of American Muslims reported experiencing an act of prejudice or hostility during the year 2006 alone.<sup>2</sup> The latest report from the American Muslim Civil Rights Organization, CAIR, reports 116 hate crimes (such as personal injury and property damage) against Muslims in 2008.<sup>3</sup> Incidents in California include the murder of Alia Ansari, a 37-year old Afghan mother of six, was shot while picking up her children from school in Fremont, California. She was singled out because she was wearing a head scarf.

If we do not stop Muslims from being physically assaulted, manhandled, and slandered today, then we know we leave ourselves wide open to repeating the grievous mistakes of the past. Didn’t we learn this lesson before? Didn’t we pledge, “Never again”? We not only have to stop the violence, we must never falter in protecting Muslim civil rights, and we need to vigorously counter media miseducation—with the facts. ☹

## Notes

- 1 [http://www.fbi.gov/publications/terror/terrorism2002\\_2005.pdf](http://www.fbi.gov/publications/terror/terrorism2002_2005.pdf), see pages 57-63.
- 2 <http://pewresearch.org/assets/pdf/muslim-americans.pdf>, page 38.
- 3 <http://www.cair.com/Portals/0/pdf/CAIR-2009-Civil-Rights-Report.pdf>, see page 9.